



## UNIT 3: USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN BUSINESS

### Delivery guidance

#### Approaching the unit

Social media is an invention of the internet age. Nothing like it existed before, but its influence now is huge and it is an exciting, dynamic area.

This unit contains a number of challenges. Firstly, learners are likely to know a great deal about social media from their personal use of it, perhaps even more than you. You will need to emphasise that this unit is not about the personal use of social media but about its use by businesses for a variety of purposes. Secondly, it is a rapidly changing area – existing social media sites regularly have new features and adjust existing ones. New social media sites appear on a fairly regular basis.

You will therefore need to keep up with the latest developments and ensure that among the large amount of information available on this topic from the internet, you are using up-to-date sources. (See, for example, the websites listed at the end of this delivery guide.)

This delivery guide does not cover everything that needs to be delivered for completion of this unit but gives examples of delivery methods. You should refer to the specification for full details of all the content that needs to be covered.

#### Delivering the learning aims

You should begin learning aim A with a review of social media sites, their features and how businesses use them. Learners are likely to be familiar with Facebook and Twitter but perhaps less so with the sites, such as LinkedIn, that are generally less popular with young people. Rather than teaching them about the features of these sites, use their existing knowledge to focus on business uses.

If you are able to get a visiting speaker from a local business to talk about how and why they use social media, this would be beneficial. A marketing manager (rather than an IT professional) would be a suitable visitor for this part of the unit, as they tend to implement social media strategies within businesses. You would need to brief the marketing manager by explaining the purpose of this unit and that your learners are studying IT rather than learning about marketing.

Learning aim B is about planning a social media campaign. There is quite a lot of marketing-related content and you might want to consider asking one of your centre's business or marketing lecturers to talk to your learners about marketing basics.

Learning aim B also focuses on understanding clients' social media requirements. This is another opportunity for you to invite a guest speaker to talk about working with clients. There are a number of possibilities – you could try to find someone from an advertising agency, or a marketing manager could talk about what, as a client, they would expect from someone planning a campaign for the company. Another possibility would be to ask learners to consider various companies, with which they are familiar, and ask them to think about what their target audience is and how that might influence their approach to marketing and the media used. You could direct learners to the large amount of information available on the internet about planning social media campaigns – from simple hints and tips to detailed case studies.

Learning aim C focuses on implementing the social media plan and reviewing the results. You will need to organise simulation and practical tasks for this learning aim, as learners will need to perform research, produce and manage content, practice posting materials and review data and user feedback on the posts. Try to ensure that there are plenty of opportunities for review and feedback to help them develop analytical skills. You, other learners, and friends or family who are familiar with social media could be involved. Learners could, for example, set up a private Facebook group to allow other learners, friends and family to interact with them without involving the general public. It is unlikely that your learners will be able to access social media websites at your centre, so much of the practical work associated with this unit will need to be carried out by learners outside the classroom as homework. Learners could demonstrate their ability to set up posts and collect data about their followers by means of screenshots and printouts. Learners could present these to the class for discussion and feedback.

Throughout their practical work, learners should be encouraged to keep a diary in which they can keep a record of their progress, any issues they encountered and how they overcame them. This will be valuable when writing their evaluation and reflecting on their own performance as part of the second assignment.

High-quality, accurate communication skills in written and verbal forms are vital for progression into higher education and in employment. As such, learners should be confident in presenting thoughts and ideas to others, as well as producing well-presented, accurate and appropriate documentation for all stages of a project. Learners must be able to effectively evaluate the success of a project and the factors that contributed to the final outcome, including their own skills, knowledge and behaviours.



Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<b>A</b> Explore the impact of social media on the ways in which businesses promote their products and services	<b>A1</b> Social media websites <b>A2</b> Business uses of social media <b>A3</b> Risks and issues	A report that explores how a business can use social media to raise its profile and promote products and services.
<b>B</b> Develop a plan to use social media in a business to meet requirements	<b>B1</b> Social media planning processes <b>B2</b> Business requirements <b>B3</b> Content planning and publishing <b>B4</b> Developing an online community <b>B5</b> Developing a social media policy <b>B6</b> Reviewing and refining plans	<p>Documentation showing the planning, preparation and implementation of the use of social media in a business, which meets identified requirements.</p> <p>Established social media pages dedicated to the business, which fulfil the requirements given in the plan, accompanied by supporting documentation.</p> <p>Statistical data generated by social media websites, including an analysis of how it was used to optimise the use of social media.</p>
<b>C</b> Implement the use of social media in a business	<b>C1</b> Creating accounts and profiles <b>C2</b> Content creation and publication <b>C3</b> Implementation of online community building <b>C4</b> Data gathering and analysis <b>C5</b> Skills, knowledge and behaviours	<p>A report evaluating the use of social media in a business against the plan, showing how well it meets the business requirements.</p>

## **Assessment guidance**

This is an internally assessed unit and learners will need to complete two internally devised and marked assignments to cover the learning aims.

For learning aim A, learners could produce a report covering the criteria, although, given the unit topic, electronic delivery (such as via a blog, wiki or audio/visual evidence) might be more relevant.

Learners may want to refer to various internet-based examples of how businesses have used social media, and these can be linked to a blog, wiki or other type of electronic document.

With so much material freely available about social media on the internet, remind learners about plagiarism. Linking to websites and citing fully referenced quotations is fine, but copying and pasting text directly from an internet source is definitely not.

Learning aims B and C are assessed together through a single assignment based on a simulated or real-world marketing problem. The scenario be detailed and complex enough to cover the scope of the specification and allow learners to explore different solutions and attain success at all grade levels.

Learners will need a 'client' to help them understand the requirements of the campaign, and this is likely to be you. If possible it may be useful for learners to use links with local employers. Learners will also need an online 'audience' to respond to their campaign posts. Although it may limit the realism, it is probably best if learners largely perform this role for each other. Encourage them to play their roles as realistically as possible, responding to posts as they would in reality. Given the simulated nature of the task and the limited time available to post and respond to comments, the data available for analysis might not be very realistic. However, learners should still be able to comment on and evaluate the information.



## Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 3: Using Social Media in Business
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Given the dynamic nature of this topic there are many opportunities for research. Learners can also draw on their personal experiences as the 'audience' for social media business promotions. Make sure, however, that you remind learners that this unit is not about personal use of social media and focus your teaching on social media in business. It is unlikely that learners will be able to access social media websites from your centre, so much of the practical work and data gathering will need to be carried out by learners outside the classroom as homework/independent study.</p>
<p><b>Learning aim A – Explore the impact of social media on the ways in which businesses promote their products and services</b></p> <p>Learners should be equipped with a range of skills and knowledge before starting the assignment – do not use the assignment as a vehicle to teach the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You could base much of the delivery of this learning aim on asking learners to carry out research into how different businesses use social media. Due to the dynamic nature of social media, you will need to use current examples for this. Try to find examples from a wide range of companies (large, small, local, national or international) selling different types of product and services and using social media in different ways (including using different social media sites). For example, Car manufacturers, large supermarkets, restaurants, phone networks, international sports brands could give learners some interesting case studies.</li> <li>Give learners opportunities to visit the websites listed in the Resources section of this guide – these contain information about using social media for business and marketing purposes.</li> <li>One way you can help learners develop the evaluative skills required for the higher grades is to set them a project to research. Ask them to select their favourite social media campaign and then present it to the group, giving reasons why it is their favourite. It is important to remind learners that they need to choose their favourite campaign, not their favourite product, and that they must give clear, detailed reasons as to why it is their favourite. Ask them to compare their favourite campaign with their least favourite, explaining how one engages their interest and why the other fails to.</li> </ul> <p>If you can arrange a guest speaker, this would be very beneficial. The ideal speaker would be from a small, young company that has used social media to promote their business. If you cannot get someone to visit in person, try to set up a video conferencing session for a speaker to give a remote presentation and answer learners' questions. Brief the speaker on the sort of topics they should cover, such as how they use social media in their business, what they find effective (and ineffective), the risks and issues of using social media and the ways that the business deals with them.</p>
<p><b>Learning aim B – Develop a plan to use social media in a business to meet requirements</b></p> <p>As an alternative to the guest speaker for learning aim A, you could arrange for a guest speaker with some knowledge of marketing to talk to the learners about marketing a business using social media, and to explain how to identify and engage a target audience. Alternatively, try to find a marketing manager or someone from an advertising agency to talk to learners, either in person or remotely. Brief your speaker carefully about what should be covered, and ask your learners to prepare questions to make the most of the session.</p>

- Ask learners to complete a case study project to develop their planning skills and practise creating engaging content. Prior to starting on the case study project, you could have a number of smaller group activities looking at the concepts of planning a social media campaign and developing engaging content including reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of content examples. Once the introductory activities have been completed, split the learners into small groups and either give them, or ask them to select, a social media campaign to plan. Each group should use a different case study – there is a wide range to choose from. The campaign could be to raise awareness of a business, promote a newly founded business, or promote a specific product or service. The business needs to be imaginary but, ideally, it should be a commercial company. It could be a charity, music group/band, or other business run on a commercial basis. However, it should not be an individual. This project will be invaluable preparation for the live assessment, so encourage learners to take notes and make sure that all group members are fully engaged in the process.
- To help develop learners' reviewing and evaluating skills, organise a review panel for the end of the delivery of the learning aim so that learners have an opportunity to present their social media campaign. Getting the panel together is the main challenge – you will need to find either subject experts or members of the public who use social media. You could ask one or two second-year learners to join the panel, or any adult who is a regular social media user. In terms of experts, a member of the business studies teaching team or a local businessperson would be suitable. Ask the groups to produce a short presentation on their plan that focuses on their target audience and how they will engage with them. The review panel will give feedback on the plan and suggest improvements. It is important that the groups listen carefully and take notes to get the maximum benefit from the process.

### Learning aim C – Implement the use of social media in a business

Learning aim C focuses on learners implementing the plan they have created and analysing the results. It is important to build up learners' skills and knowledge before they begin work on the assignment for this learning aim – you should not use the assignment as a vehicle for teaching the content.

- Help your learners to understand connections between a business' social media presence and its website and other media exposure. This should be in terms of having consistent branding across all media (styles, fonts, colours, logos etc) and in the links between the website and social media sites. Working in small groups, learners can research examples of how real businesses do this and then present their findings back to the whole class.
- This research should be broken down into small tasks so that all learners have the opportunity to research the use of social media by a range of organisations, including their target audiences.  
Help learners to develop their skills by encouraging them to evaluate how effective the business' use of social media is by means of discussions and the use of probing questions to ensure that they consider the issues in sufficient depth.
- You could also ask learners to set up a web page/website for the imaginary business for which they are running the social media project. If learners are also completing the website development unit (*Unit 6: Website Development*), then there is a possibility of linking the two. Alternatively, learners can set up a simple website using, for example, Google's Blogger blog page creation tools. They can also use this site to investigate the use of Google Analytics.
- Split the learners into small groups and give each group a different business that has made extensive use of social media. Each group should look at their business' recent use of social media and discuss what their purpose might have been for recent postings (eg direct advertising, brand development, encouraging likes) and how effective they have been (based on the number of likes and comments postings have achieved, and their own opinion). The groups

can also look at how well the business' social media efforts are linked with their website. Once the investigation is complete, learners can prepare and give a short presentation to the rest of the class reviewing what they have found. Learners can also attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach the company has taken.

- Allow each group of learners the opportunity to research several social media campaigns, rather than focusing on only one type of business and audience profile, before they tackle a mock assignment. That way, they will be more thoroughly prepared for the actual assignment.
- It makes sense for learners to develop these skills by continuing with the social media campaign they started in learning aim B. Set up a simulated activity that requires learners to take the role of social media users interacting with the posts made by other groups. This will limit the realism of the project but is appropriate given the timescales and the nature of the exercise. Brief the learners carefully on how to run the simulation, asking them to behave as they would if it were a real activity. Set some ground rules about how they will be expected to interact with the imaginary business. This project is a very important 'practice run' for the live assessment and gives you an opportunity to resolve any issues and check learners' understanding.
- Learners developing skills for reviewing and evaluating the process and outcomes is important for obtaining higher grades and for progression to higher education. Once they have completed the social media campaign project, ask learners to prepare a presentation on what went well, what did not go so well and how they might change things next time. This will also help prepare learners for the live assessment. Encourage the whole class to comment on each group's project and to give constructive criticism. Remind learners that they must optimise their social media content to meet merit criteria. Feedback from others should help them see how to do this.
- It will benefit learners to maintain a diary or take notes as they complete the various practical activities in the lessons relating to this learning aim. They should also note the comments that their peers make when they give feedback.
- Ensure that learners understand how to fulfil the assessment criteria for the pass, merit and distinction grades.



## **Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications**

Pearson BTEC Level 3 International in Information Technology:

- *Unit 1: Information Technology Systems- Strategy, Management and Infrastructure*
- *Unit 2: Creating Systems to Manage Information*
- *Unit 6: Website development*

## **Resources**

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Internationals in Information Technology. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/published-resources.html>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

## **Websites**

- [www.socialmediaexaminer.com](http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com)  
Social Media Examiner is one of many blog sites with up-to-date articles about using social media for business purposes.
- [www.socialmediatoday.com](http://www.socialmediatoday.com)  
Social Media Today focuses on social media marketing for business.

*Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.*